



Bertie Howroyd

1898 – 1917

Bertie was born in Ravensthorpe on 31st March 1898 and baptised at the Wesleyan Chapel, North Road, Ravensthorpe on 5th May that same year. His father was Ephraim Bates Howroyd, a journeyman piano maker born in Ravensthorpe in 1872 and died in 1951. His mother was Ellen (nee Parkin) born in Dewsbury in 1872 and died in 1933. They were married on 27th March 1897 at St. Paul's Church, Birkenshaw.

They had two more sons; Harry, born in 1904 and died in 1905 and Willie, born in 1905 and died in 1906.

On the 1901 Census the family lived at Lee Street, South View Terrace, Ravensthorpe, in 1911 at 1, Garden Terrace, Ravensthorpe and later at 93, Clarkson Street, Ravensthorpe.

Bertie started his working life as an assistant greengrocer, later becoming a Percher (inspector of cloth) at Pickering, Groves & Co. He attended the Wesleyan Chapel and Sunday school.

He served as Private 42274 in the 10th Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) having being called up in April /May 1917. After three months training during which he spent some time in hospital, he was sent out to the Western Front and joined his Battalion north of Roeux, around 8 miles east of Arras. On 5th September 1917 the Battalion had proceeded to relieve the 6th Dorset Regiment in the front line. He was killed in action on 6th September 1917 and is buried in Browns Copse Cemetery, Roeux, Pas-de-Calais, France. Bertie was awarded the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Roeux is a village about 8 kilometres east of Arras. Brown's Copse Cemetery is about one kilometre north-west of Roeux on the eastern outskirts of the neighbouring village of Fampoux. The cemetery is named from a small copse (the Bois Rossignol) on the east side. Roeux was built over a system of caves which helped to make its capture in 1917 exceptionally difficult. It was attacked by the 9th (Scottish) Division without success on 12th April. The chemical works close to the railway station were taken by the 51st (Highland) Division on 22nd April and after incessant fighting, the village was cleared by the same Division on 14th May. The chemical works were lost again and retaken on 16th May. The Germans re-entered the village at the end of March 1918, and it was finally retaken by the 51st Division on the following 26th August. The cemetery now contains 2,072 burials and commemorations of the First World War. 862 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to eight casualties known or believed to be buried among them.

Bertie is commemorated on the Dewsbury Cenotaph in Crow Nest Park and in the Dewsbury Roll of Honour kept in Dewsbury Central Library and on the Ravensthorpe War Memorial in St. Saviour's Church.

In Memory of

Private

Bertie Howroyd

42274, 10th Bn., West Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales's Own) who died on 06 September 1917 Age 19

Son of Ephraim and Ellen Howroyd, of 93, Clarkson St., Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury.

Remembered with Honour

Brown's Copse Cemetery, Roeux



Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Headstone photograph by courtesy of Richard Houghton.